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Nordling Religion



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Nordling Religion is a multifaceted belief system encompassing a vast pantheon of gods, goddesses, mystical powers, and local forces, along with human prophets and saints. Unlike monotheistic or centralized religious systems, Nordling Religion lacks a singular head or overarching authority. Instead, it is characterized by regional hierarchs, archpriests of specific deities, and charismatic leaders such as grandmasters of knightly orders and self-proclaimed prophets. Despite its complexity, there is a semblance of order and a hierarchical scale of the divine.

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Hierarchical Structure and Practices



The hierarchical structure of Nordling Religion is reflected in the practices of its priests. Settled priests typically devote themselves to a single deity, dedicating their lives to the worship and service of that god or goddess. These priests maintain temples, conduct rituals, and provide guidance to the followers of their specific deity. They acknowledge and respect other gods within the pantheon, recognizing their influence and existence, but their primary devotion remains with their chosen deity.

In contrast, wandering priests have a more inclusive approach. They travel from community to community, invoking all the gods as needed to address the diverse needs of the people they encounter. These priests act as intermediaries between the divine and the mortal world, performing various rites and offering blessings tailored to each situation. Their broad knowledge of the pantheon allows them to cater to different regions and their unique spiritual requirements.

While followers of one deity generally believe in the existence of other deities, their worship practices are centered around their primary god. This exclusivity can lead to varying degrees of devotion and sometimes even animosity towards other gods. In extreme cases, followers of one god may openly oppose or denounce another deity, reflecting the complex and competitive nature of the pantheon.

In that sense, it could be classified as a Henotheistic religion, where a devotee gives primary allegiance to one deity without denying the existence or power of others. This system allows for both personal and communal expressions of faith, where individuals or communities can choose their patron deity based on local traditions, personal experiences, or societal needs.

The Scale of the Divine

The divine hierarchy in Nordling Religion is structured from the most important to the least important as follows:

Mystical Powers

The most fundamental forces in Nordling mythology. They are not personified by any gods but are considered the laws of reality that even the gods must adhere to. Some of these powers existed before the universe itself and govern the very fabric of existence. Key Mystical Powers include:

- **Destiny:** The force that dictates the course of all events and lives, beyond the control of gods and mortals alike.
- **Chaos:** The primordial state of disorder from which the other Mystical Powers were formed, representing unpredictability and change.
- **Order:** The principle of structure and stability, opposing Chaos and maintaining the balance of the cosmos.
- **Eternity:** The concept of timelessness and infinity, encompassing all of existence beyond the temporal realm.
- **Glorious:** The embodiment of honor, achievement, and recognition, inspiring greatness in both gods and mortals.
- **Darkness:** The absence of light, representing mystery, the unknown, and often, malevolent forces.
- **Light:** The source of illumination and clarity, opposing Darkness and symbolizing truth and goodness.
- **The White Frost:** A mystical power representing the end of the world, which is believed to eventually be reborn under a "new sun" in a completely different form. This concept is part of the Last Battle between the forces of good and evil known as "*Ragh nar Roog*."

Lesser Mystical Powers

Significant forces within the Nordling pantheon but are not as fundamental as the primary Mystical Powers. They can be utilized by the gods and worshipped by mortals. Examples include:

- **Eternal Fire:** Associated with Telawel, the Eternal Fire symbolizes the light that illuminates the darkness, endurance, progression, innovation, and hope for a better tomorrow.
- **Neverending Water:** Associated with Pereplut, the Neverending Water symbolizes life,

healing, and continuity.

- **Unstoppable Wind:** Symbolizing freedom, change, and the boundless potential for new beginnings. Associated with movement and transformation, the Unstoppable Wind represents the constant flux of existence and the power to overcome obstacles.

Immortal Ones ✧

The main deities in the Nordling pantheon. Due to the decentralized nature of the religion, the exact composition of this group can vary, reflecting regional variations and local traditions.

The name come due to the fact, that nothing could kill them, except the Mystical Powers.

Some of the primary deities include:

- **Melitele:** The prime deity representing love, marriage, peace, fertility, nature, abundance, and motherhood. She embodies nurturing and growth, overseeing the natural cycles of life. Melitele is married to **Dagda**, and their union symbolizes the harmony of male and female principles.
- **Freya:** The goddess of fertility, honorable combat, strategic war, love, sex, lust, and beauty. Freya is revered for her dual role as a nurturing figure and a fierce warrior. In regions like Skellige and Kovir, some of Melitele's and Huldra functions overlap with those of Freya. Freya is married to **Wotan**, although their relationship is complicated due to Wotan's occasional involvement with **Morrigan**.
- **Morrigan:** The goddess of magic, violent war, and phantoms. Morrigan's domain includes the darker aspects of conflict and the supernatural. She has a sentimental relationship with Wotan, often causing tension with Freya.
- **Kreve:** A prime deity, brother of Wotan and Telawel, associated with energy, bolts, spontaneity, resourcefulness, expansion, and power. Kreve embodies the dynamic and unpredictable forces of nature and creativity.
- **Wotan:** A prime deity created by the Mystical Powers, Wotan is the god of war, winter, hunting, and death. He represents the harsh and unyielding aspects of existence. Wotan is married to Freya but also has a complicated sentimental relationship with Morrigan.
- **Telawel:** A prime deity, brother of Wotan and Kreve, representing craftsmanship, honest work, and fire. Telawel is the patron of artisans and laborers, symbolizing the value of hard work and innovation.
- **Apolo:** The god of poetry and music, son of Dagda and Melitele. Apolo inspires artistic expression and cultural achievements.
- **Dagda:** A prime deity, essentially the male counterpart of Melitele, representing manliness and sharing many of Melitele's attributes. Dagda embodies strength, protection, and fertility.
- **Coram Agh Tera:** An aberration created by the Mystical Powers as a punishment for the gods when they attempt to defy them by destroying them, embodying death, cruelty, and destiny. Coram Agh Tera serves as a reminder of the limits of divine power and the consequences of hubris.
- **Dagon:** The god of the depths, son of Sedna and Njord. Dagon rules over the mysterious and often dangerous oceanic realms.
- **Lilvani:** The goddess of the moon. Lilvani governs the cycles of the moon and influences night, dreams, and intuition.

- **Sedna:** The goddess of the sea, wife of Njord. Sedna represents the life-giving and destructive powers of the ocean.
- **Uroboros:** The god of time. Uroboros controls the passage of time and the cycles of life and death.
- **Njord:** The god of the waters in general. Njord oversees all bodies of water and their bounty.
- **Neitvin:** The god of wisdom, civilization, perfection, and virility. He has a complicated sentimental relationship with Freya at the same level as Wotan with Morrigan. Neitvin represents the intellectual and civilizing aspects of human development.
- **Yrrheded:** An evil power associated with goetia and demons. Yrrheded embodies chaos, malevolence, and forbidden knowledge.
- **Svalblod:** The god of war, cruelty, and sacrifice. Svalblod is worshipped by those who seek power through brutality and fear.
- **Lilit:** The goddess of night, passion, erotism, and women and their children. Lilit represents the primal and sensual aspects of life.
- **Baldmir:** God of truth, law, and rightful kingship. Son of Wotan and Freya, Baldmir upholds justice and the rule of law.
- **Haiel:** God of the Afterlife, Underworld, and the Dead. Son of Wotan and Morrigan, he created and rules Linsumraj, the paradisiacal afterlife in Nordling Mythology and its related dominions such as Limbo and **The Abyss**. Haiel is also the protector of great warriors after death, who are collected and maintained in a sleeping state until the end of everything, and controls Bifrost, the rainbow bridge between the living and the dead worlds.
- **Malavel:** Messenger of the gods, the day of Malves (Tuesday) is dedicated to him. Malavel ensures communication between the divine and mortal realms.
- **Demiurge:** According to the philosopher Vysogota of Corvo, an overgod, the replacement for the Nordling gods and truth of the universe, unlike all other gods and mystical powers who are fake. According to Nordling Mythology, the first god, born from the combination of the Mystical Powers, was killed by Wotan and his brothers to create the universe after all the other prime deities rebelled against them.
- **Lugh:** The god of the sun, born from the syncretism of the monotheistic Great Sun religion and the Nordling Religion in the Nilfgaardian Northern Provinces. Lugh represents growth and vitality.

Lesser Gods

Lesser Gods have minor roles and often represent specific functions or aspects of the Immortal Ones. Examples include:

- **Lyfia:** The goddess of harvest, daughter of Melitele and Dagda. Lyfia ensures bountiful crops and agricultural prosperity.
- **Epona:** The goddess of horses, daughter of Melitele and Dagda. Epona is revered by those who depend on horses for travel and work.
- **Huldra:** The goddess of livestock, feasts, lust, wealth, spinning, and weaving. Not to be confused with the race of the same name, Huldra protects pastoral life and domestic arts.

- **Nehaleni:** The goddess of luck and concealment. Nehaleni aids in hiding and protecting those in need.
- **Pereplut:** The god of rivers. Pereplut governs freshwater bodies and their ecosystems.
- **Veyopatis:** The god of rivers, fish, and sailing, brother of Pereplut. Veyopatis ensures safe travels and abundant catches.
- **Verna:** The goddess of refugees and thieves. Verna provides protection and opportunities for those living on the margins of society.
- **Loki:** The god of trickery. Loki represents cunning, deception, and the unpredictable.
- **Tousdeus** (Allgod): The god of country life. Tousdeus oversees rural communities and their well-being.

Quasi-gods ✦

Powerful spirits or mythological heroes that are not founders of anything and have even more specific functions than the lesser gods. Examples include:

- **Aesculapius:** The guardian of medicine. Aesculapius protects healers and promotes health and wellness.
- **Water Lords:** Protectors of the swamps. These spirits ensure the safety and balance of wetland ecosystems.

Demigods ✦

The offspring of gods and mortals, possessing some divine attributes but not on the same level as the gods. Some of the demigods are:

- **Turnus:** Creator of many board games, son of Apolo and a mortal. Turnus represents innovation and entertainment.

Quartergods ✦

The descendants of demigods, possessing even fewer divine attributes. Some of the quartergods are:

- **Augeas:** Son of Turnus, inventor of ships. Augeas embodies creativity and progress in maritime technology.

Mythological Founding Heroes ✦

Legendary figures who have achieved near-divine status through their heroic deeds and profound impact on the world. These heroes are often credited with founding cities, nations, or religious orders, and their stories are passed down through generations as part of the cultural and religious fabric of the Nordling people. Some Mythological Founding Heroes are:

- **Hemdall:** A central figure in Skellige myths and sagas, Hemdall is depicted as a mighty warrior who will rise again in the time of *Ragh nar Roog*, the Last Battle between the forces of good and evil. According to legend, Hemdall will be awakened by Kambi, a magical golden rooster, and will stand on Bifröst, the Rainbow Bridge, to blow his horn

and signal the final conflict. His role in this apocalyptic battle is to rally the forces of good against the specters of Chaos from Mörhogg.

Lesser Spirits /Local Forces 💎

Minor supernatural entities that serve even more specific functions within the natural and spiritual world in comparison to the lesser gods and quasi-gods. They are often tied to particular places, objects, or aspects of daily life. Unlike gods, lesser gods or quasi-gods, lesser spirits do not possess significant individual power but collectively play an essential role in the fabric of the world. They can be invoked for minor blessings or protections and are often appeased through simple rituals or offerings.

Angels, are also part of the lesser spirits. Created by Malavel or other gods (depending on the type of angel), they serve as messengers between the gods and the prophets. They are classified according to what type of messages, or at what time of the year they deliver messages.

Prophets 💎

Prophets are regarded as superior to saints but inferior to Mythological Founding Heroes. They are believed to be chosen messengers of the gods in the material plane, endowed with the ability to communicate divine will to mortals. Prophets often play critical roles in religious reforms, guiding the faithful, and foretelling future events. Their authority is derived from their perceived more direct connection to the gods than priests or saints, and they are often instrumental in shaping the religious and moral landscape of their time. Some prophets are:

- **Lebioda:** A prophet whose visions and parables are contained in the *Good Book of Prophet Lebioda's Wisdom*. He became legendary for his goodness, wisdom, and modest peaceful ways. According to Nordling mythology, he was contacted by various angels who show them the truth about the world.

Saints 💎

Saints are revered individuals who have performed great deeds during their lives and are taken as examples of virtue and piety. In both Nordling mythology and the Creole religion derived from the Nordling religion, known as [Santism](#), saints hold a special place. They are considered champions of the gods, chosen by one or many gods to uphold and spread the divine will. Saints are venerated for their exceptional contributions to their communities, their unwavering faith, and their embodiment of divine principles. The process of canonization involves recognition by regional hierarchs and archpriests, who may declare someone a saint after thorough consideration of their life's work or miracles (if any) attributed to them. Some saints are:

- **Saint Elmo:** A member of Fabio Sachs' expedition that discovered the Western Continent. Held in high esteem by the people of the Nordling colonies of [Fabiola](#) for his crucial role in that expedition, Saint Elmo is also known as Elmo the Helper. There is also a weather phenomenon dubbed St. Elmo's fire in his honor.

The Creation Myth

According to the myth, the primordial void, an endless expanse of nothingness, was the beginning of all things. From this void, Chaos emerged as the first Mystical Power, a force of pure disorder and potential, existing without form or purpose. Chaos, in turn, gave rise to other Mystical Powers, each embodying a fundamental aspect of existence.

These Mystical Powers—such as Destiny, Order, Light, Darkness, and the White Frost—began to shape the cosmos, creating the first beings: the gods. The most powerful of these gods was Demiurge, born from the combined essence of the Mystical Powers. Demiurge was not merely a god but the personification of the universe's creative force, holding within him the potential of all that could be.

However, the other gods, led by Wotan and his brothers Kreve and Telawel, grew envious of Demiurge's power. They feared his dominance and the possibility that he might consume all creation to become an absolute singularity. Driven by ambition and the desire to shape the universe according to their own wills, the gods rebelled against Demiurge. In a colossal battle that shook the foundations of existence, Wotan, Kreve, and Telawel succeeded in overthrowing Demiurge. His death marked the birth of the physical universe—his body transformed into the stars, planets, and all matter, while his blood became the rivers and oceans.

The Rebellion Against the Mystical Powers and the Creation of the Coram Agh Tera and Yrrhedes, and Thus Evil

Despite their victory, the rebellion against Demiurge was not without consequences. The Mystical Powers, which had previously been impartial forces of nature, became aware of the gods' ambitions and sought to maintain the balance of the cosmos. The gods, emboldened by their triumph over Demiurge, attempted to challenge these Mystical Powers themselves, seeking to control or even destroy them to gain ultimate dominion over reality.

The Mystical Powers, however, were beyond the full understanding and control of the gods. In response to the gods' rebellion, they created Coram Agh Tera, an entity born from the remnants of Demiurge's destructive potential. Coram Agh Tera was not just a god but an embodiment of death, cruelty, and the inevitability of destiny—forces that even the gods could not escape. This entity was a reminder that all creation, even the divine, had limits and could not defy the fundamental laws of the universe.

Alongside Coram Agh Tera, the Mystical Powers also brought forth Yrrhedes, a dark and malevolent force associated with the primordial chaos itself, goetia, and the most forbidden knowledge. Yrrhedes represented the destructive and corruptive aspects of the Mystical Powers, serving as a counterbalance to the gods' desire for control. Where Coram Agh Tera embodied the finality of death, Yrrhedes was the ever-present threat of corruption and decay

—a reminder that power could always be twisted into evil.

With the creation of Coram Agh Tera and Yrrheded, evil entered the cosmos. The rebellion against the Mystical Powers had unleashed forces that could never be fully contained or destroyed, forever altering the nature of existence.

Relationships and Family Ties Between All Gods ✦

At the center of this divine family is Wotan, a prime deity created by the Mystical Powers, who is often depicted as the father of many gods and the leader of the pantheon. Wotan is married to Freya, the goddess of fertility, honorable combat, love, and beauty. Their union symbolizes the balance between war and love, strength and nurturing. However, Wotan's relationship with Freya is complicated by his affair with Morrigan, the goddess of magic, violent war, and phantoms. This affair often causes tension and conflict within the divine family, as Freya struggles with Wotan's divided affections.

Freya herself is a powerful and influential goddess, whose domains overlap with those of Melitele, the prime deity of love, marriage, and fertility. Melitele is married to Dagda, a god embodying manliness and sharing many of Melitele's attributes. Their union is one of harmony, representing the ideal of a balanced and fruitful relationship between male and female principles.

Kreve, another prime deity and brother of Wotan, represents energy, spontaneity, and power. He is often seen as a rival to Wotan, though their relationship is also one of mutual respect and shared purpose. Telawel, the third brother, is the god of craftsmanship, honest work, and fire. He is the patron of artisans and laborers, symbolizing the value of hard work and innovation. Together, Wotan, Kreve, and Telawel form a triad that plays a central role in the governance of the cosmos and the maintenance of order.

Other notable family ties include Haiel, the god of the Afterlife and the Underworld, who is the son of Wotan and Morrigan. Haiel's dominion over the dead and his creation of Linsumraj, the realm of the afterlife, position him as a key figure in the cosmology of the Nordling Religion. Meanwhile, Apolo, the god of poetry and music, is the son of Dagda and Melitele, representing the union of their creative and nurturing qualities.

The divine family is further expanded by lesser gods, demigods, and even quasi-gods, who are often the offspring of these primary deities and their various unions with mortals or other divine beings.

Differences of Functions in Gods Sharing the Same Domain ✦

In Nordling Religion, it is not uncommon for multiple gods to share domains or have overlapping responsibilities. However, these gods typically represent different aspects or

interpretations of a single domain.

For example, both Melitele and Freya are associated with fertility, but they embody different facets of this domain. Melitele, as the prime deity of fertility, marriage, and motherhood, represents the nurturing and protective aspects of fertility. She is often invoked by those seeking to ensure the health and growth of children and the prosperity of families. Freya, on the other hand, while also a goddess of fertility, is more closely associated with the passionate and erotic aspects of love and fertility. She embodies the life-giving power of sensuality and the strategic elements of honorable combat, tying fertility to the vitality and strength required in both love and war.

Similarly, Wotan and Svalblod are both gods of war, but they govern very different aspects of conflict. Wotan, as a prime deity, represents the honorable and strategic elements of war, as well as the inevitable reality of death. His war is one of necessity, order, and the harsh realities of life. Svalblod, however, is the god of war, cruelty, and sacrifice. He embodies the brutal and savage side of war, where power is gained through fear, bloodshed, and the sacrifice of others. Followers of Svalblod seek to dominate through brutality, in stark contrast to the more structured and strategic approach of Wotan.

Expressions Mentioning Divine Figures

In Nordling culture, references to divine figures are deeply embedded in everyday language, rituals, and expressions. Some examples are the following:

- **As true as Melitele's love:** This expression signifies something that is deeply genuine and nurturing. It is often used to affirm the sincerity of someone's feelings or actions
- **Dancing with Morrigan's Ghosts:** Expression used to describe someone engaging in dangerous or risky endeavors.
- **He/she/they is favored by the Moon:** This expression indicates someone who is blessed with good fortune, wisdom, or intuition.
- **A soul of the Last Battle:** Refers to someone who is heroic or destined for greatness

(very common in Skellige, less in the other Northern Kingdoms)

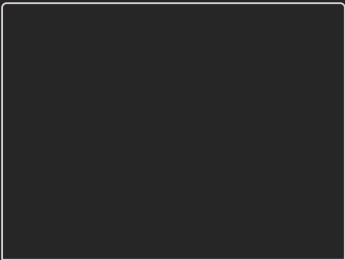
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